

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as the present claimed invention would not have been obvious from Claim 1 of Yamamoto at least for the reason that the third step of Claim 1 of the present Application is not taught or suggested by Claim 1 of Yamamoto. The significance of this step with respect to the teachings of Yamamoto is discussed in more detail below.

II. Rejection of Claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The present invention relates to a process for producing a titanium-containing silicon oxide catalyst as defined in Claim 1, which can be used for reaction obtaining, for example, an oxirane compound from a hydroperoxide and an olefin type compound and which can exhibit high activity. The present claimed invention is also directed to the catalyst obtained by the recited process.

A significant aspect of the present claimed invention is in the third step, that is, to substitute the template extraction solvent remained in the solid after the removal of the template (second step), with a solvent substantially inert to a silylating agent to be used in the following fourth step.

The Examiner states:

Regarding step three of claim 1, Yamamoto "147" teaches mixing the solid with hexamethyldisilazane and toluene to form a mixture, which corresponds to the claimed step of substituting the solvent used for the extraction which was contained in the solid after the removal of the template, with a solvent which is substantially inert to a silylating agent (Col. 7, lines 47-50).

In the above step of Yamamoto, the mixing of the solid with hexamethyldisilazane and toluene is conducted for silylation, and this silylation step corresponds to the step four of the present Claim 1.

Yamamoto does not teach the step three of present Claim 1, in which the template extraction solvent remained in the solid after the removal of the template, is substituted with a solvent substantially inert to a silylating agent to be used in the following silylation step (fourth step).

Instead, Yamamoto teaches heating the solid at 150°C for 5 hours under nitrogen flow for drying, in order to remove the template extraction solvent from the catalyst to be silylated. (Col. 7, lines 45-47; Column 4, lines 58-62).

The unobviousness of the present claimed invention is shown by Example 1 compared to Comparative Example 1 shown in Table 1. As can be seen from the table (page 21), there was improvement in the reaction result when the treatment from extraction to silylation was substitution with toluene (Example 1) versus drying with hot nitrogen (Comparative Example 1).

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the present claimed invention is neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious by Yamamoto.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: December 11, 2008


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